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Friday, April 15, 2005



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IN SEARCH OF GOOD FOOD

Families can subscribe to fresh produce

Though I've always been in search of great food, my understanding of the concept changed drastically on a trip to Italy in 1994.

I was in the back of a ridiculously large tour bus negotiating ridiculously narrow, winding roads and fantasizing about Dramamine. In front of me, I glimpsed a small brown paper sack being passed over the heads of the passengers, making its way toward me. It contained cherry tomatoes, and everyone was sharing.

A product of the suburbs, raised without a family garden, I always considered cherry tomatoes unspectacular but inoffensive. I thought the tartness might clear my palate and settle my stomach. I ate two and had an epiphany.

They tasted fabulous. Tart but sweet and flavorful and like a burst of Italian sunshine in my mouth. It was the moment when my nutrition background and my search for great food coalesced: If food that was good for you also tasted fabulous, we'd all be healthier.

I was flooded with memories of insipid supermarket tomatoes, bland Red Delicious apples, hard strawberries that crunched when



Sarah Fritschner

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Farm-fresh tomatoes are part of the produce available through a subscription food service referred to as "community supported agriculture," or CSA. A local group is the Family Farm Project.

Family Farm Project CSA

Where: Delivers fresh produce Wednesdays to 800 W. Market St.

you chewed.

I came home vowing to find great tasting food that was natural and good for me. Like those Italian tomatoes, it should be produced close to where it was sold and eaten. It should be sold seasonally if it was produce and without inputs if it was meat.

A lot has changed in 11 years. Now, retailers see the virtue of selling Kentucky and Indiana food products. During that time, as the income from tobacco has dwindled and interest from consumers has increased, more farmers have begun growing food.

Some of these farmers have formed a subscription food service referred to as "community supported agriculture," or CSA.

Consumers "subscribe" at the beginning of the season, and farmers deliver fresh produce through the entire growing season to a central location for pick-up.

One group in our area is the Family Farm Project (www.familyfarmproject.com). For these farmers from Henry, Trimble and Oldham counties, the season begins May 11. For \$450, a family will receive a grocery bag full of fresh, locally grown, seasonal produce every week through Oct. 26. Deliveries are made at 800 W. Market St., across from Glassworks.

Early-season produce includes asparagus, beets, broccoli, mixed greens, lettuce and strawberries.

When the summer warms up, in come the popular vegetables, including tomatoes, corn, peppers and melons.

Later, those high-summer vegetables continue, fall vegetables come in and spring vegetables return -- a total of more than two dozen varieties throughout the season.

Subscription vegetables have their drawbacks -- you're compelled to cook the food you get,

When: May 11 to Oct. 26

How much: \$450 for 25 weeks, or \$18 a week

What: More than two dozen fruit and vegetable varieties and access to purchase fresh flowers and meat.

Phone: Les or Pam, (502) 222-1827.

E-mail: SunshineFr@aol.com.



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and you might not be sure what to do with your eggplant or fresh herbs.

On the other hand, because this group has three years' experience, it knows just about how many radishes one family can use.


For more information on Kentucky-grown and -made products, go to www.localharvest.org and click on KY in the state search mechanism. You'll find an assortment of available products, from woodland botanicals to handmade soaps, including things to eat.

Is there a food or cooking ingredient you love? Tell us! Write: Sarah Fritschner, The Courier-Journal, P.O. Box 740031, Louisville, KY 40201-7431. Or e-mail sfritschner@courier-journal.com.

Online: Ask Sarah a question at courier-journal.com/sarah

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